

TOLERATION

Not to be

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ABUSED

By the

Independents.

By a Lover of Truth and Peace.

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TOLERATION

Not to be abused by the

Independents.



THE following Discourse shall consist of *Four* particulars.

First, *The lawfulness of Communicating with our Churches by the Confessions and Arguments*

of the Congregational Divines.

2. *The same proved by demonstrating the Apostolical Churches more vitiated than Ours, from whom a Separation is made by the Independents; and yet a Separation from those Primitive Churches, utterly discountenanced by the Apostles.*

3. *The same Proposition proved by demonstrating that we have not given them the like, or any just Cause, as the Church of Rome gave them and us. Which is the first particular to be proved.*

Secondly, I shall shew the sinfulness of erecting Altar against Altar, of gathering Churches out of Churches.

Thirdly, That the Independents are averse in their Principles to Toleration as well as the Presbyterians, and so equally obliged not to abuse the present gracious Indulgence.

Fourthly, I shall shew, that by His Majesties late Declaration the Church of England is still established as the Basis, and the bare suspension of the pcenal Laws, doth indeed take off the Obligation, upon the account of wrath, that lay before upon Dissenters; but does not cancel the Obligation of Conscience, by which the Independents, and all Indulged parties, are still to avoid all Causeless and groundless Separations from this Best of Reformed Churches.

First,

First, *The Lawfulness of Communicating with our Churches, by the Arguments and Concessions even of the Independents themselves.* Our *Parochial Churches* are owned to have the *Essentials of true Churches* by all sober Congregational men : (For there is, the *pure Word of GOD Preached*, the *true Sacraments Administred*, and an *implicit Covenant between Pastor and People* in joyning together.) All that is pleaded is *Corruption and Defect* in the *outward Exercise and Administration of Church Order, and Discipline*. Now that it is *Lawful* (supposing, but not granting this *bar* lies against the *Church of England*) to joyn with Churches so *defective and corrupt*, is not only acknowledged, but fully proved by Reverend Mr. *Norton*, of the *Congregational way* in his Answer to *Apolstus* (as Dr. *Stillingsfleet* in his *Irenicum* quotes it to the present purpose) which I desire the *Brethren* to consider, whom it chiefly concerns, and to lay seriously to their hearts : and, without a reply to his Arguments, they cannot justify their *Separation* from us.

1. A Believer may Lawfully joyn in *Communion* with such a Church, where he cannot enjoy all the *Ordinancies* of GOD, as in the *Jewish Church*, in our Saviour's time, which refused the *Gospel of Christ*, and the *Baptisme of John*, and yet our Saviour commands us to hear the *Scribes and Pharisees* (sitting in *Moses's Chair*;) which bearing implies *Conjunctionem Ecclesiæ Judaicæ*, A joyning with the *Jewish Church*. So with Churches rejecting an *Article of Faith*; as the Church of *Corinth*, the Doctrine of the *Resurrection*; the Churches of *Galatia* rejecting the Doctrine of *Justification by Faith*: yet the *Apostle* no where requires, on that account, a *Separation* from them.

2. A Believer may Lawfully joyn in *Communion* with such a Church, in which some *Corruption* is tolerated in the *Worship of GOD*, without *Reformation*; as the Offering upon *High places*, from *Solomon* to *Hezekiah*, in the Church of *Judah*; the observation of *Circumcision* and the *Law Ceremonial* in the Churches of *Galatia*.

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3. A *Believer* may Lawfully joyn himself in *Communion* with such a *Church*, in which such are admitted to *Sacraments* who give no evident signs of *Grace*, but seem to be *Lovers of the World*; this he proves, because it is every mans Duty to *Examine* himself, and anothers *sin* hurts not me, and so is no argument against my Duty. And besides, by mens coming *unworthily*, *Non polluitur Communio, licet minuitur Consolatio, The Communion is not defiled, though the comfort of it be diminished*: This he proves also from the *Church of Corinth*, amongst whom were many scandalous that had not *Repented*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 20, &c. and in the *Church of the Jews*, which lay under great *Corruptions* when *Christ* and His *Apostles* communicated with it.

4. Although a *Believer* joyns with such a *Church*, he is not therefore bound with the *Guilt*, nor defiled with the *pollutions* of others that Communicate. It is his Duty incumbent, and in doing his Duty, he contracts no *Guilt* upon himself.

5. A *Believer* which hath joyned himself to such a *Church* is not bound to *withdraw* and *seperate* under pain of *Guilt* if he does it not: for to be *lawful* to joyn, and *unlawful* to continue the Communion implies a contradiction; for the *first* speaks it to be a *Church*, and the *second* to be no *Church*; and so it is not Lawful to *seperate* from a *Church* true, as to *Essentials* (and such the *Independents* own in their *Apologetical Narration*, our *Parochial Churches*) though guilty of *Corruptions*; for the ground of *Communicating* is its being a *Church*, not a *corrupt* or *defective Church*. And that men are not guilty by *partaking* with those that are guilty of *Corruptions* in a *Church*, appears from the *Church* of the *Jews* in the case of *Ely's Sons*, and the *Christian Churches* of *Asia* and *Corinth*; where we read of many *Corruptions* by *S. Paul* reprov'd, but no *Mandate* to *seperate*, which had certainly by the *Holy Ghost* been given, and *S. Paul* would not have omitted, had it been a sin to communicate while those *Corruptions* were in the *Churches* of *Asia* and *Corinth*. Thus far their own Reverend
Norton.

Norton. Now I desire these *Congregational Leaders*, who gather Churches out of our Churches, to reply to this *Learned Divine* of their own perswasion, or to consider what Answer is to be given to the *searcher of all Hearts*, for resisting that light of *Conviction* that shines in upon their Consciences.

Again, not granting but supposing only; that in this *Church* from which these *separate, Church-Discipline* were neglected, *Worship* defiled, *Manners* corrupted, or *Tyranny* exercised: suppose we grant all this, which we need not, this will not justify a *Separation* from the *Church of England*. My reason is, because there were greater *Corruptions* in *Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship* (and no *Separations* countenanced by the *Apostles*) in the *first Apostolical Christian Churches*, then in Ours, or any other *Reformed Churches*, from whom a *Separation* is made in these times. As for instance; to begin with *Doctrine*; In what *Church* of ours is the *Resurrection* of the *Dead* denied, an Article of that importance that all our *Christianity*, in effect, depends upon it?

It was denyed by many in the *Church of Corinth*. In what *Churches* of ours is the *Doctrine* of *Justification by the Law*, or any *Doctrine* so destructive of the *Merit of Christ*, generally maintained, as in the *Galatian Churches*? Again, for *Worship*; Do ours partake of the *Lord's Table* and the *Table of Devils*, as among the *Corinthians*? Are our *Ecclesiastical Assemblies* so confused, that whosoever comes in must presently take us for Mad? Do ours come to the *Communion drunk*, as at *Corinth*? Then for *Manners*, and *Life*; We acknowledge our selves *heynous Offenders* (which, I suppose, those that call themselves the *Saints*, and *separate* from us *Publicans*) do (unless frantick) confess *true* of themselves: But what then? have we worse than *Incest*, *Fornication*, *Covetousness*, *Malice*, *Contentions* unrepented of, as is the *Church of Corinth*? Or, *biting* and *devouring* one another, permitters of *Idolaters*, boasters of *Gifts*, as in the *Church of Galatia*? As touching *neglect of Discipline*; First in the *Apostles* own company, the *Ministers* that should *exercise Discipline*, they
all

all sought there own , and none the things of *Jesus Christ* ; and the grossest Vices winked at and fomented , as we saw before in the Church of *Corinth* ; and should have been so still, had not the *Apostle* been Living , and exciting them to their Duty.

Lastly , concerning *Tyranny* ; Ye see what Oppression the false *Apostles* used , 2 *Cor.* 11. 20. *Ye suffer*, saith the *Apostle*, *if a man take of you, if a man bring you into bondage , if a man devour you, if a man exalt himself, &c.* by which words he toucheth the *Tyranny*, though out of malice against the *Apostle*, willingly submitted to, by the Church of *Corinth* : and we know that *Diotrephes* exercised his Government with such Insolency, that he cast out whom he would , admitted whom he would, opposed *S. John* himself ; yet no news of *Separation*.

Now let these men consider , that *separate* from us , the *Apostolical* Church was a *Virgin* newly espoused to *Christ* , in the midst of the *Heathen*, under the Rod of *Persecution*, the great *Apostle* then living, and yet vitiated more then

the Churches that these *depart* from ; and yet the then *Separatists* branded with the Characters of *Schisme* and *Sedition* by the Blessed *Apostles*. And here I desire the men of this way seriously to consider , that *Separation* being discountenanced, from Churches more *vitiating* than ours, by the Holy *Apostles* ; how these men, owning our Parochial Churches *true* as to *Essentials*, can ever justify their *Separation* from us ? It would certainly be duly weighed by such as desire to appear *tender Consciences* , and so capable of a *right* in the present *gracious Indulgence*. That they do so acknowledge our *Parochial Churches*, their *Apologetical Narration* declares sufficiently in these following words ; *We have alwaies profest (and that in these times , wherein the Churches of England were most , either actually overspread with defilements, or in the greatest danger thereof) that we both did, and would hold Communion with them, as true Churches of Christ ; and that our Parochial Churches were the very Body of Christ ; which is in effect to approve and forsake at the same time, and gives occasion, too great, of applying a Sentence*
in

in S. *Austin* against *Parmenian* (Lib. I. cap. 8. against these Dissenters:) *Et adversum nos loquuntur , & nobiscum loquuntur , & cum eos obmutescere compellat veritas, silere non permittit iniquitas: They speak against us, and they speak for us; and when Truth constrains them silence, their Iniquity will not let them hold their peace.*

There are *three* things that I would humbly offer to all sober men of the *Congregational persuasion*; and I beseech them to consider them *seriously*, as from one that equally wisheth their *Salvation* with his own.

1. That they would cautiously distinguish between *corruptions in Doctrine*, and *corruptions in the practice of a Church*.

2. That they would Conscientiously distinguish between *corruptions*, whether in *Doctrine* or *Practice*, profest and avowed by a *Church*, and required as the absolute conditions of *Communion* from all its members; and *corruptions* only crept in and meerly tolerated in a Church, and not any way required as the conditions of

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3. To distinguish carefully between *Non-communicating* as to the abuses of a Church, and a positive and total *Separation* from a Church as it is a Church. These three (the second especially) duly weighed and considered, would either wholly put a period to their *Separation* from the *Church of England*; or tend at least to the lessening of the Breach too sadly occasioned, for want of a due reflection upon the *Premisses* aforesaid.

Again, We of the *Church of England* have not given them the like, or any just cause of *Separating*, as the *Church of Rome* gave them and us: For where do we urge any Doctrines as Articles of *Faith*, which we offer not to a tryal by Scripture, and the Four first *General Councils*, which all Christians reverence (and were Anciently honoured next to the *Four Gospels*;) and if the *Church* should teach any other Propositions, she protests against their being Articles of *Faith* and of *Necessity* to Salvation, and for this reason imposeth not Her XXXIX. Articles, as Articles of Faith, but of
Peace

Peace and Communion : nor does the Church of *England* censure other Churches for their different *Confessions*, but allows them the liberty she herself takes, to establish more or less conditions of *Communion*, as the *Governours* of the Church shall deem most expedient for *Unity* and *Peace*. She only requires of such as are admitted to any *Office* or *Employment* in the Church, to subscribe to her *Articles* as certain *Theological Verities* not repugnant to *G O D's Word*, particularly culled out and selected to be taught, and maintained within her *Communion*, as highly conducive to the preservation of *Truth*, and prevention of *Schisme*. And for this reason She passes no other censure upon the Impugners of her *Articles*, then against the Impugners of Her *Government*, *Liturgy*, and *Rites*; because all intended by her for the same end, *The avoiding of all Disorders, and Confusions*. But as for the *absolute Articles* of the Church of *England*, they were not of Her own Inventing, but such as She found established in the best Ages of the Church, nearest the Primitive and

Aposlo-

Apostolical simplicity : Here She fixeth the bounds of Her *Faith*, to prevent the danger of endless *Additions*, and *Innovations*. And because in smaller matters somewhat may escape the greatest caution and *prudence*, She hath reserved *Just power* to her self to reform what is really amiss, and finds so abused, that the use of them cannot stand with *Piety* and *Holineß*; allowing the same Liberty to all her *Sister Churches*, and all *Church Governours* within the sphere of their respective Jurisdictions. This is the true state of the *Reformation* of this Church, as hath been apparently evidenced by her *Regular Sons* against all Opposers.

Now let the *Independents* consider, whether this be not (though a brief) yet a True account of the *Moderation* and *Prudence* of this Church; and then let them reflect at the same time upon the *second* especially, of the *Three* aforesaid *Propositions*: and upon the whole examine their Tender *Consciences*, whether it does not Justifie our *Separation* from the *Romanists*, and at the same time prove them *guilty* by

by departing from us. We both agree, that *where any Church is guilty of Corruptions in Doctrine and practice*, which it owns and requires as absolute conditions of Her Communion, *there to Separate is no Schisme, but Lawful and Convenient*. Let them make the Church of *England* appear thus *guilty* they are acquitted: If they cannot *prove* it as they have not done as yet (and doubtless they have *Zeal* enough to set them forward, if it could be demonstrated) what hinders their Return to the *Church of England*, unless the Conscience, which they call *Tender*, be sullen and obstinate? Not to prove any thing that *justifies* a *Separation* against the *Church* which they forsake, and yet continue to keep up their *Altars* against it, is not so much allyed to *tenderneß of Conscience*, as to *hardneß of Heart*, uncapable of being reclaimed by the greatest and most generous *condescensions* in the World.

So much of the *First* particular, *The Lawfulness of Communicating with our Parochial Churches*, from the Arguments and *Concessions*

of the *Independents* themselves; from the *Primitive Apostolical Churches* more *vitiating* than Ours, and yet all manner of *Separation* discountenanced by the *Apostles*, and we not having given the *Independents* any just cause as the Church of *Rome* gave them and us. That is the *first Proposition* I engaged to defend, *The Lawfulness of communicating with our Churches.*

Secondly, I am to shew the *sinfulness and danger of erecting Altar against Altar, and gathering Churches out of our Churches*: The Sin is the sin of *Schisme*, severely branded by Ancient *Fathers* and *Orthodox Councils* (as well as in the *Apostolical Writings*) as the height of *Pride* and *Wickedness*. That the *Independents* are guilty of this Sin is clearly deducible from what I have said already; *From their own Arguments, and Concessions; from the Instances of the Apostolical and Primitive Churches, more vitiated than Ours, yet Separation discountenanced by the Apostles; and by a comparison between our withdrawing from Rome,*

Rome, *and their Separation from us.* These things already proved, speaks them *Causeless* to *Separate* from us; and that *causeless Separation* speaks them *Schismaticks*. They themselves allow our Parochial Churches *True*, as to *Essentials*; and, what if we suppose *spots* and *pollutions*, as to the *outward* Administration of *Order* and *Discipline*; this, if we should grant them, onely infers a lawful *desire* and *endeavour* of *Reformation*, but it warrants no *Schismatical Separation*; for no *Corruptions* in a Church can give *occasion*, or *allowance* of going out of it, but such as strike at the *Foundation* of *Christian Doctrine* and *Worship*; which, setting *Calumny* and *railing* aside (which we are not obliged to take for *Reason* and *Argument*) they never yet attempted to prove against the Church of *England*, so far they are *inexcusable* before *G O D*, and so far from appearing *Men of tender Consciences* to the *World*.

Where are those *Corruptions* in *Doctrine* or *Practice*, which the Church of *England* doth *Impose* upon her *Members*, as the absolute *Con-*

ditions of Her Communion. Let them lay aside *Wrath* and *Darkness*, and give us a pregnant Demonstration; or like Men of Candour and Ingenuity plead *Guilty*, and *Return*. Let them in short prove these *two* things: 1. That our Episcopal *Ordination* and *Jurisdiction*, Our *mixt* Communion, Our Rites of *Order* imposed, not out of any *Necessity*, but *Uniformity* and *Peace*, and some other things by them inveighed against, to be indeed *Superstitious*, and (as they call them) *Antichristian Abominations*. When that difficult Task is over (if it can be ever accomplished) let them prove that we urge *Disputable* things, or *known Errours* with such severity, as the Church of Rome does *Purgatory*, *Indulgences*, *Supererogation*, and other notorious *palbable Errours*; for which, justly condemned by the *Reformed Churches*. The very Cock of the Congregation is here nonplust (the most daring of all their *Undertakers*) unless you will take *Noise*, and *Clamour*, and *Confidence* for *Demonstrations*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *The Independents are equally Enemies to Toleration with the Presbyterians; and from the same very Principles, and by consequence equally obliged not to use (however not to abuse) the Gracious Indulgence.* Nothing in Conjunction with, or addition to, what is prescribed in the *Word of GOD* (as to *Worship, and Government*) is to be admitted or Tolerated. Upon this *Principle* the *Independents* in particular (as well as *Non-conformists* in general,) for so their greatest and most forward *Champion* tells us, They do, and will adhere to, and stand upon as to the Differences, between them and us. The plain meaning of which, applyed to the Church of *England*, is briefly this, That the *Independent* way of *Worship, and Government*, is only prescribed in the *Word of GOD*; and Ours not, but repugnant: And by this *Principle* they exclude as well their *Brethren* that lent them the *Principle*, as well as the *Inferiour Sectarists*, and are at defiance with them, as well as the Church of *England*; for *Independency* being only prescribed in the *Word*
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by this Principle. If they will adhere to it, no other way can be Indulged or admitted. With these Men (as well as the *Disciplinarians*) there is but *One* only *true way* of Worship and Government prescribed in the *Word*. Nothing, *secondly*, that is *unlawful* may be Tolerated by the *Civil Magistrate*; and, nothing is *lawful* but what is prescribed in the *Word* (and you may be confident, that is the *Independent* way of *Worship* and *Government*.) These *three* things resolved, whence should *Toleration* proceed, or an *Indulgence* be expected from the *Independents* to differing persuasions, unless he playes *fast* and *loose*, and as he pleaseth, *owns* and *renounceth* the *Jus divinum* of *Independency* in the same *Oracles*.

Every *Seet* (the *Independent* especially) allows no Worship, but their *own way* established in the *Word*. This is not only pleaded against the *Church* of *England*, but every *Faction* bandyes against every *Faction* for the *Divine* Right. The *Presbyterian* Discipline is the only Scepter of *JESUS CHRIST* for all
Churches

Churches Government to the End of the World : He can neither Indulge himself, nor accept an *Indulgence* where other Parties are not excluded: The *Independent* allows only his *own Way* of Worship, and excludes all *Dissenters* from Worshipping GOD aright; and from the *beauty* and *purity* of *Gospel Ordinances*; which is a Principle Sir John *Presbyter* lent him: And how can an *Indulgence* hence proceed?

By this Principle the *Presbyterian* first assaulted the *Church* of *England*. By the same Principle the *Congregational Hec̃tor* takes Sir *John* to task, and beats him out of the field: By the same the *Anabaptist* attempted the *Independent*; and all the under-*Sects* the *Anabaptists*: And so if they had crumbled into a *thousand sub-divisions*, still as every *Sect* gathers strength enough, he persecutes all *Opposers*. And, How should the *Independent* be more merciful than the *Presbyterian*, or any other *Sect*, whose Enmity to *Toleration* doth equally arise from the same common Principle of the *Divine Right*, only of their *own way* of Worship and Govern-

Government, from which all the *Seels* are excluded, as well as the *Church of England*? There is *One* only way of *Worshipping* GOD aright, and that way is the *Independent* way of Worship. *Where is Toleration then?* It is excluded. *By what Law?* By *Divine Right*: And so *Every plant that my Father hath not planted must be rooted out*; and so only *Independency* is to be *Tolerated*, unless *Kings* and *Princes* who Rule for GOD, may Indulge men in an *Open violation* of the *Law of GOD*? And if you look a little backwards, it may admit a Dispute, Whether the *Scepter* of JESUS CHRIST were more an *Iron Rod* under the *Kirk*, or the *tender hearted Tryers*? It may indeed sometimes consist with *Carnal prudence* (supposing the *Independents* to have power in their hands) to connive at, and Indulge the *Lesser Factions*, the better to hold out the *Flag of Defiance* against the *Royalists*, and the *Presbyterians* their most considerable Competitors. Or they may (as the *Usurpers* tender-Conscien'd Army once did) offer the taking away even the *Pænal Laws*

Laws from the very *Papists*, to *collogue* with *Forraign Princes*, and so have the greater *secu- rity* in their Villanous Designs against the *King*, and the *Church*; but this is a *State Juggle* for the advancement of the *Good Old Cause*: But then as soon as the *fear* is over from a- broad, then they spared nothing that *Sacri- ledge* could devour.

And now, Can any Man, that looks back upon *Independent mercy* and *forbearance*, believe that Men of such *Principles* and *practices* (who are now pleased that *Episcopacy* is established, and *Pœnal Laws* removed from *Papists*, only because *Indulged* themselves) would Tolerate either *Poperij* or *Episcopacy* if they had *Power* in their hands, and not rather Lord it with the Insolence of *Usurpers*? *Credat Judæus Apella, non Ego.*

So that as a late *Treatise* demonstrates, the *Presbyterian* hath no cause of joy, because *others* are *Indulged* as well as himself; whereas his *Doctors*, *Elders*, and *Deacons* are the perpetual *Scepter* of *CHRIST* to the end of the World.

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for *all Churches Government*; and therefore,
Down with the Colours of the Dragon; advance
 the Standard of *CHRIST*.

The *Independents* have no cause of Joy, be-
 cause the *Church of England*, and the *Presbyte-
 rian* Limb too, of the *Antichristian Leviathan*,
 are included, as well as the rest of the Parties
 among us: His *Way* being only laid down in
 the *WORD*, and *all* others repugnant to the
Holy Scriptures. Yet they take the advantage,
 both out of a *hatred* to a *third* Party, the *Church
 of England*, and the next thing is to fight one
 with another for the *Government*: and then the
 only *Scepter of Christ* is the *Conquerours* worship;
 the longest *Sword* is the *Divine Right*; the *Pike*
 and *Gun* declare the *Cause of GOD*; and in-
 fallible *Artillery* decides all the *Controversies* re-
 lating to the *Gospel Truth*. And thus the *Pres-
 byterian* (who thought to have erected his *Dis-
 cipline* upon the sad *Eclipse* of the *Church of
 England*) was powerfully baffled and confuted,
 by such *Arguments* as the *Independent Man of
 War* carryed in his *Snapsack*.

Do not the *Independents*, when most cool and moderate, look upon all other *Churches* and *People*, as all *Revolters* from the *purity* and *beauty* of *Gospel-Ordinances*, introducers of *Will-Worship* and *Superstition*, instead of *Disciples* of the Lord *JESUS*; not allowing any *Dissenters* the least share or degree of *Wisdom*, or *Godlineß*? And men of such *Principles* of *this* forehead and complexion, must needs carry *tender bowels* to Men of differing *Perswasions*. Certainly, unless where the rules and maximes of *carnal Policy* interpose and plead for *mercy* to *Dissenters*, their *Clemency* is the same with the *Presbyterian*, who first lent him the Principle, of *not admitting any thing not expressly delivered in the Sacred Scriptures*: by which Principle they are engaged in a War with one another, as well as against their common *Antagonists*. So that the *Tables* are now turned. It is not the Question, *whether all Parties may be Tolerated*; but, *whether Independents only*: for there is but *One true way of Worship*, and that is *Theirs*. *Theirs* only hath the *Divinum Jus*, and *Princes* may not

Indulge Men in an open violation of Scripture Precepts, and Directions. And so every Sect is engaged to root out all the rest, as Enemies to the Scepter of the Lord JESUS.

Fourthly, *The Execution of the Pœnal Laws being suspended, by the late Declaration in Favour of Dissenters, does only take off the Obligation, upon the account of Wrath, to Obedience; but the Conscience is still obliged, to avoid all causeless and groundless Separations from our Churches.* This will be manifest enough to any one that seriously reads the *Declaration* it self, and a late Treatise, *Toleration not to be Abused*; which will extend as well to the *Independents* as the *Presbyterians*, whose aversion to *Toleration* is built upon the same common Principle, the *Divine Right* of their one onely way of Worship and Government, in the *Sacred Oracles*; and so I refer them to that part of the Discourse before mentioned, That they are obliged (as before the *Declaration*) to avoid all groundless Separations. For the Church of *England* is, as before, established as the *Basis*; and so the Obligation

ligation of *Conscience* still Obligatory upon all the *Indulged* Parties to avoid *Schifmes*, and all *causleß* departure from us. The Obligation upon the account of *Wrath* is removed indeed; but if they would appear *tender Consciences* to the World, the *King's* suspension of the *Punishment* should make them the more *Obedient* for *Conscience* sake; and a *Gracious Indulgence* rather *abate*, than *heighten* their *Opposition* against the Church of *England*, still established.

I shall now conclude all, by desiring them to consider, what they themselves acknowledge in the *Declaration* of the *Faith* and *Order* of the *Congregational Churches*, in Chap. 26. *Of the Church, &c.* The purest Churches under Heaven are subject both to *Mixture* and *Error*. And in their *Institution* of Churches; Persons that are joyned in Church-fellowship, ought not lightly to withdraw themselves from the *Communion* of the Church, to which they are so joyned. To these two let them add the *Four particulars* in this Discourse mentioned: and upon the result of all consider, Whether *Ambition* and *Pride*, rather
then

then a *Conscientious* tendernesſ keep not up their departure from; and *oppoſition* to the Church of *England*. I am not as this *Publican*, Come not near me, for I am holier then thou. An over-valluing of our own worth, and a *Phariſaical* contempt of others, is the uſual riſe of *Schiſme*; for only by *Pride* cometh *Contention*; ſo the beſt of *Kings* and *Preachers*.

Thus the *Valentinians* looked on themſelves as the only *ſpiritual Men*. The *Phariſees* the only *Separati*, ſeparate *Persons*. The *Sadducees*, *Juſti*, the only *Righteous*. The *Novatians*, *Καθαροί*, the only *Puritans*: And none Men of *Knowledge* but the *Gnoſticks*, and the acute *Tertullian*, when *Montaniſt*. All others were *Pſſici*, and he was come to his *Nos ſpirituales*. And if (out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh) *ſpiritual Pride* is the original of your *Schiſme*. For you only are *GOD's* *Israel*, his *Eleſt* and precious ones. You only have *Communion* with *GOD* in pure *Ordinance*. All the World ſaln ſhort of *GOD's* *Truth*, but your ſelves: And none is *Orthodox* out of the *Pale* of your own *Church*.

Not

Not only *Papsts*, *Prelatists* and *Arminians*, but even your dear Brethren, the *Presbyterians*, are Limbs of the *Antichristian Leviathan*. All revolted from the Lord JESUS, and to be treated as members of the Whore, whom the Saints hate, and shall make desolate and naked, eat her flesh, and drink her bloud. This is the Canting Dialect of your *Independent Leaders*.

To Conclude. If it be not *Ambition*, but *Conscience*; Let it so appear by your *Charity* to *Dissenters*, by a serious and impartial Enquiry into the Grounds upon which you separate from us, without *prejudice* or *passion*; and do not so far Idolize a *Seet*, or an *Opinion*, as to prefer it before the *Peace* and *Settlement* of a *Church*, and *Nation*.

F I N I S